

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

Claims 1-13 and 31-33 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 12, and 31-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over JP 11-250917 A (JP '917) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,233,833 to Balinski ("Balinski"). Claims 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over JP '917 in view of Balinski as applied to claim 1 and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,261,710 to Marianowski ("Marianowski"). Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over JP '917 in view of Balinski and U.S. Pat No. 4,514,475 to Mientek ("Mientek"). Claims 1, 10-12, and 31-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Marianowski in view of JP '917 and Balinski. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Marianowski in view of JP '917, Balinski, and Mientek.

Claims 2-9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Office Action states that claims 2-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

II. Claims 2-9 In Form for Allowance

Claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of base claim 1. Accordingly, claim 2 is believed to be in form for allowance as are claims 3-9, which depend from independent claim 2.

III. Conclusion

Having addressed all outstanding issues, Applicant respectfully requests an indication that the application is in form for allowance of claims 2-9. To the extent the Examiner believes that it would facilitate allowance of the case, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned

at the number below. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to apply any charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 19-0733.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: April 10, 2007

/Gregory J. Cohan/
Gregory J. Cohan, Reg. No. 40,959
BANNER & WITCOFF, LTD.
28 State Street, 28th Floor
Boston, MA 02109
(617) 720-9600